STAR TREK™
ADVENTURES

HARD ROCK CATASTROPHE

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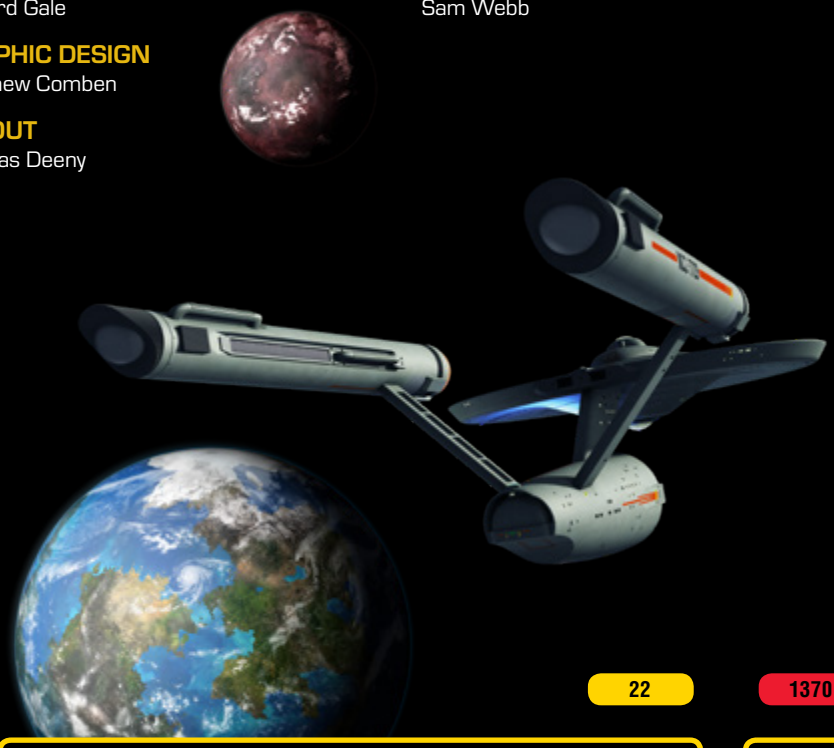

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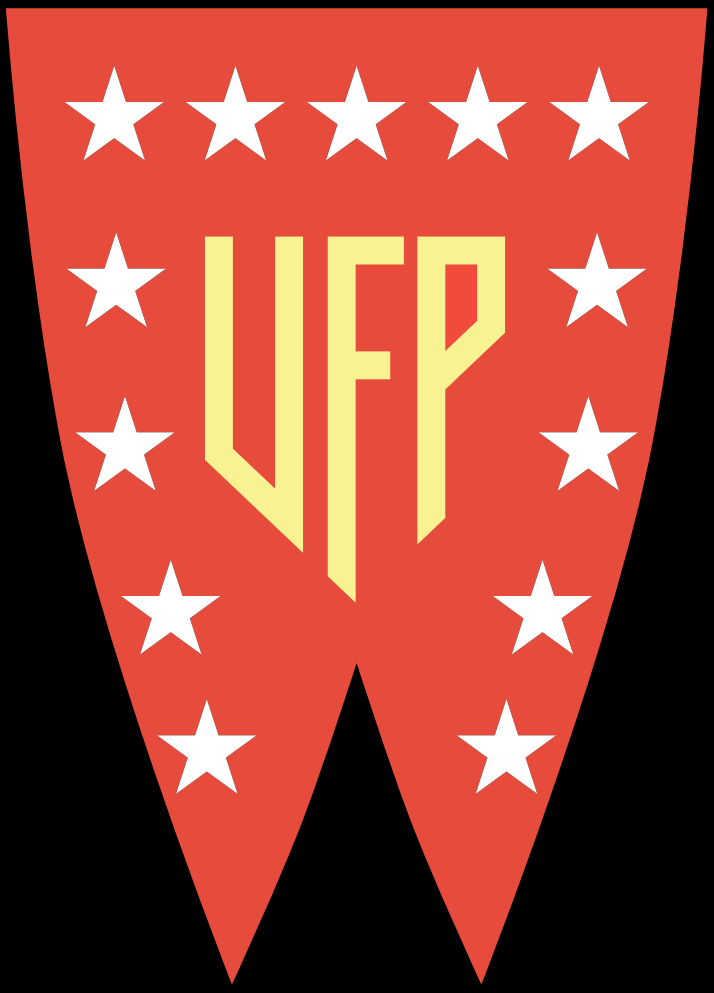
HARD ROCK CATASTROPHE

BY CHRISTOPHER L. BENNETT



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01.10

HARD ROCK CATASTROPHE
SYNOPSIS

In this adventure, the crew answers a distress call from a Saurian colony planet; its few but sizeable cities are under attack from what seems like something out of an old monster movie: giant animals 60-100 meters long and half that in height, with rock-like hides impervious to phasers and photon grenades. On searching Starfleet computer records, the crew will learn that the *U.S.S. Enterprise* discovered these "Rock Beasts" on an uncharted planet in late 2269 (*The Animated Series*: "Mudd's Passion"). The only known thing that affects them is a mood-altering chemical that was claimed to be a "love potion," but its effects were temporary and the formula is unknown.

On reaching the planet, the crew meets its officials, including the governor, who takes pride in what her people have built and does not wish to see it destroyed; the commanding general of the defense forces, who's frustrated at his inability to stop the creatures and resentful about relying on outside help; and the chief scientist, who's fascinated by the nature of the creatures and the mystery of how they came to this planet.

Steps the Players could take include:

- Attempting to beam or tractor the creatures away (this will fail due to their great mass, or at best will succeed with one creature before burning out the relevant system).
- Searching for a way to delay or divert the rock beasts' approach, e.g. building deflector barriers or digging trenches.
- Attempting to communicate with the rock beasts (unsuccessful due to their low intelligence), or to use their animal instincts and reflexes to redirect them somehow.
- Attempting to identify a chemical compound that can sedate the rock beasts.
- Investigating the mystery of how the beasts got here from their native planet, and whether it was accidental or a deliberate attack.
- Helping to evacuate the planet's capital city before the rock beasts arrive.

It will turn out that the creatures' "eggs" were brought to the planet deliberately by environmental extremists seeking to halt the spread of colonization. At first, the chief scientist will be suspected due to her protective attitude toward the rock beasts, but the real culprit will turn out to be the general, who disapproves of his people's expansion into the Galaxy and wants them to retreat into isolationism. The Players will attempt to either secure the extremists' supply of pheromonal agents for controlling the Rock Beasts or to engineer equivalent agents through their own research. If successful, this will reveal a means to make one or more of the creatures see the capital city as territory to be defended against the others (the "Let them fight" solution). The result will be a climactic battle that will smash a few evacuated buildings on the edge of the city, but will eventually succeed in driving the attacking rock beasts away. It's a stopgap, but it will give the chief scientist time to devise other chemicals to pacify the rock beasts so that they can be returned to their home planet with Starfleet's help.

DIRECTIVES

In addition to the Prime Directive, the Directives for this mission are:

- Protect the citizens of Rikyu
- Starfleet Directive 010: Before engaging alien species in battle, any and all attempts to make first contact and achieve non-military resolution must be made.

The Gamemaster begins this mission with 2 points of Threat for every Player Character in the group.

ADAPTING THIS MISSION TO OTHER ERAS

This mission is easily adaptable to any post-TOS time frame with no significant changes (except maybe transporter and tractor tactics being more likely to succeed, depending on the ship's parameters).

It is not ideally suited for the *Enterprise* era, given Starfleet's lack of knowledge regarding the Saurians and Harcourt Fenton Mudd. A creative Gamemaster could set up the events of this mission in their campaign with that backstory, however, and run this mission as written.

01.20

HARD ROCK CATASTROPHE
ACT 1: MONSTER PLANET

"Captain's Log, Stardate 8054.1. We have received a distress call from Rikyu, an independent Saurian colony beyond the Federation border. Planetary governor T'Rimushei is requesting assistance with a natural disaster endangering the planet's cities, although she was vague on the specifics of the threat. The Saurians are famously self-reliant, so it could be that the governor was embarrassed to ask for help – but I got the impression that she didn't think we would believe her if she told us more.

Nonetheless, the governor made it quite clear that the lives of over eight million colonists are at stake, so we are obligated to respond. Yet the Saurians are such a strong, adaptable people that it's hard to imagine what could be too much for them to handle."

SCENE 1: THE ROCK BEAST

The scene begins with the starship arriving at Rikyu, an M-Class planet in a close orbit around a small Type K red dwarf star, whose relatively dim light is tolerable for the nocturnal Saurians' large, sensitive eyes. The planet was settled some 40 years ago and already has six major cities (the capital New Veranith, New Akleyro, Kochi, Akado, Akanat, and Imotas), various smaller habitations on its largest land mass, for the Saurians are an industrious and energetic people.

Since the crew has little knowledge of what the source of distress is, they should scan the planet as soon as they drop out of warp. This is a **Reason + Science or Security Task** with a Difficulty of 2 (since a planet is quite large and they aren't sure what they're looking for), assisted by the ship's **Sensors + Science**. The Gamemaster should give the science officer the following information:

Seismic scans reveal strange, highly localized seismic disturbances at various points on the planet, not very intense for seismic activity, but pinpoint-focused and apparently moving. In fact, one such pinpoint is moving straight toward Kochi, one of the major cities. Two of the other cities and several smaller habitations, mining camps, power plants, and the like show significant damage.

High-resolution scans of the disturbance on the outskirts of the city of Kochi reveal the cause to be something extraordinary: a gigantic creature more than 60 meters long, with a three-eyed head, arms ending in fierce pincers, and a snakelike rear body. It's rampaging through the outskirts of the city and tearing into the smaller buildings in the area with its teeth, or crushing them under its immense weight as it slithers through. It's like something out of an old monster movie. Life sign readings show that the area has been evacuated, but the creature is heading toward the more heavily populated center of the city, which still has too many Saurians to evacuate in time. Saurian troops on the ground are engaged in all-out combat with the beast, but even their most lethal phaser beams and photon grenades fail to penetrate the creature's rocklike hide.

Governor T'Rimushei hails the ship. She is a fairly typical-looking Saurian, with a bald, egg-shaped reptilian head, smooth pinkish skin, and bulbous yellow eyes giving her a perpetually surprised expression. The governor pleads with the captain to open fire on the creature; explanations can wait. But there is little the crew can do at this point. Starfleet Directive 010 requires exhausting all peaceful options before engaging an alien species in battle (see Voyager: "In the Flesh"). Also, given the creature's obvious resistance to weapons fire, any orbital phaser or torpedo bombardment sufficient to kill the creature would surely kill the ground troops and do massive damage to the neighboring city.

The Players may attempt to think up creatively nonviolent options for driving the creature away from the city. Possibilities include (but need not be limited to):

- Firing ship's phasers in front of the creature in order to blind it or frighten it off. The Saurian ground troops, who are nocturnal and have sensitive eyes, will need to be warned in advance. The creature, however, will be only momentarily dazed, and will then advance toward the beam. If the Players continue the attempt, a sufficient Momentum spend will reveal that the creature is curious about the beam and can be led by it, similarly to how a cat can be led by a laser pointer. However, the creature's hunger will make it difficult to draw it away from the city in this way – call it a **Science + Weapons Task** with a Difficulty of 3. Also, the aggressiveness of this tactic adds two Threat to the pool, since it risks angering the creature and putting the ground troops in more danger. If the Task is not successful, the creature will lose interest in the phaser beam and resume its attack.

- Beaming it away from the city. The creature is so massive and dense that the strain on the transporter will be too great and the effort will have to be aborted before it succeeds. However, if the beam can be sustained for a full 2 intervals (as an **Engineering + Structure Task** with a Difficulty of 3), the giant creature will be sufficiently startled by the sensation that it will break off the attack on the city and retreat into the mountains.

- Locking onto it with a tractor beam and dragging it away. This can only be attempted by a ship with a tractor beam of Strength 3 or above and will have to be done from a low forced orbit, using thrusters to keep station above the city. Again, the creature's mass makes this extremely difficult, as does the distance and the attenuation of the beam by dozens of kilometers of intervening atmosphere, so it will have to be aborted before it burns out the tractor beam. It also adds one Threat to the pool by alarming and irritating the creature. But if the beam is sustained for 2 intervals (a **Control + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 3), the creature will be shaken enough to retreat, with the Complication that the agitated Beast is more likely to attack any personnel near its retreat path.

If all attempts are unsuccessful, the creature will continue its attack until it kills or injures a number of the ground troops and drives the others into retreat, whereupon it will tear down a multistory building (now successfully evacuated) and consume a fair amount of its metal and concrete before retreating back into the mountains.

TRINOCULAR ROCK BEAST [MAJOR NPC]

The smallest genus of the alien megafauna somehow imported to Rikyu, ranging from 60-70 meters in length and massing 150-180 tonnes. These creatures have rounded or blockish heads with three forward-facing eyes and wide, toothy mouths. They have broad, segmented, snakelike bodies with a single pair of forelimbs ending in pincers and no hind limbs. The front half of the body can rear up into a nearly vertical position. Their serpentine locomotion makes them the slowest of the Rock Beasts, but highly destructive to whatever they crawl over.

TRAITS: Rock Beast

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL 09	FITNESS 12	PRESENCE 11
DARING 12	INSIGHT 05	REASON 04

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND 02	SECURITY 04	SCIENCE —
CONN —	ENGINEERING —	MEDICINE —

FOCUSES: **Burrowing,** Hunting, Melee

STRESS: 32 **RESISTANCE:** 5

WEAPONS:

- Claws (Melee, 5, Area, Vicious 1, 1H)
- Teeth (Melee, 6, Piercing 2, Vicious 1, 1H, Debilitating)

SPECIAL RULES:

The creature is massive. It has twice as much Stress as normal. Further, it takes 8 Stress to inflict an Injury, instead of 5.

- Invulnerable/Staggered
- Menacing
- Threatening

QUADRUPEDAL ROCK BEAST [MAJOR NPC]

A midsized genus of the alien megafauna imported to Rikyu, ranging from 70-80 meters in length with a mass of over 200 tonnes. These creatures have a fairly normal quadrupedal anatomy – a head with two eyes and a sharp-toothed mouth in a tapering snout, four legs, and a heavy tail. However, this genus is facultatively bipedal, i.e. it can raise itself to a semi-upright position and use its forelimbs as grasping or piercing claws.

TRAITS: Rock Beast

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL 09	FITNESS 13	PRESENCE 11
DARING 12	INSIGHT 05	REASON 04

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND 02	SECURITY 04	SCIENCE —
CONN —	ENGINEERING —	MEDICINE —

FOCUSES: **Burrowing,** Hunting, Melee

STRESS: 34 **RESISTANCE:** 5

WEAPONS:

- Claws (Melee, 5, Area, Vicious 1, 1H)
- Teeth (Melee, 6, Piercing 2, Vicious 1, 1H, Debilitating)
- Tail [Bludgeon] (Melee, 6, Knockdown, 1H, Deadly, Inaccurate)

SPECIAL RULES:

The creature is massive. It has twice as much Stress as normal. Further, it takes 8 Stress to inflict an Injury, instead of 5.

- Invulnerable/Staggered
- Menacing
- Threatening

HEXAPEDAL ROCK BEAST [MAJOR NPC]

The largest genus of alien megafauna imported to Rikyu, 80-100 meters long and massing up to 250 tonnes. These creatures support their weight on six heavy limbs, and their mouths are equipped with massive pincers capable of piercing or crushing solid rock. This genus is too heavy to raise itself upright, but it is nearly as tall by default as the other species are when erect.

TRAITS: Rock Beast

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL 09	FITNESS 13	PRESENCE 12
DARING 12	INSIGHT 05	REASON 04

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND 02	SECURITY 05	SCIENCE —
CONN —	ENGINEERING —	MEDICINE —

FOCUSES: **Burrowing,** Hunting, Melee

STRESS: 36 **RESISTANCE:** 5

WEAPONS:

- Teeth (Melee, 6, Piercing 2, Vicious 1, 1H, Debilitating)
- Pincers (Melee, 7, Piercing 3, Vicious 2, 1H, Deadly)

SPECIAL RULES:

The creature is massive. It has twice as much Stress as normal. Further, it takes 8 Stress to inflict an Injury, instead of 5.

- Invulnerable/Staggered
- Menacing
- Threatening

SCENE 2: EXPLANATIONS

A landing party beams down to Rikyu's capital of New Veranith to discuss the situation with Governor T'Rimushei. This is a large city full of advanced, towering skyscrapers, but integrated with the natural environment and interspersed with ample swaths of parkland and canals. Engineered, bioluminescent plants and swarms and nests of tame Saurian firewasps provide gentle illumination in the city's darker areas, with reflective surfaces strategically placed to distribute the light.

In T'Rimushei's office, the Players are introduced to two other key officials: General Zotabia, the leader of the planetary defense force, who has a purplish complexion and a stocky build and is clearly resentful of having to rely on outside help, and Doctor K'Manehai, the chief scientist, an older but quite energetic Saurian with greenish-brown skin, who exhibits a scientific fascination that makes her initially seem more sympathetic to the creatures than to their Saurian victims.

K'Manehai explains the following:

- The creatures began appearing and attacking the colony's cities several weeks before. Between attacks, they somehow conceal themselves in the mountains, so the Saurians have not been able to hunt them down and are unsure of their numbers.
- The creatures consume minerals to sustain their rocklike armor and strong internal skeletons, but also need to consume organic matter, so they're naturally drawn to the densest concentrations of life and refined metals on the planet – namely, the cities.
- There has been no prior evidence of any such life forms on Rikyu in the 40 years since the colony was founded, and biochemical analysis suggests that the beasts are not native to the planet's biosphere. But it is unclear how they could have reached Rikyu.

General Zotabia counters that it's clear enough how they got to Rikyu: Someone brought them here to attack the colony. K'Manehai isn't ready to accept that, suggesting that their rocklike constitution is so robust that their species might be able to survive in space. It's conceivable that their eggs, or the equivalent, came to this planet through panspermia – perhaps blasted off the surface of their own world by an asteroid impact and drifting through space until finally landing here.

In any case, the ship's science officer will be able to bring some clarity to the debate, for a search of Starfleet records has turned up a match for the creatures. Provide that Player with the information in Handout 1 (found at the end of this mission) to report to the others.

K'Manehai confirms the presence of both of the described species on Rikyu, as well as the Hexapedal Rock Beasts (and whatever others the Gamemasters may wish to invent.) She also notes the anomaly that such large, impervious creatures could be affected by such a small quantity of the drug. Spock's report presumed that the crystals were merely storage capsules for the drug, but K'Manehai wonders if they could have been some natural formation indigenous to the Rock Beasts' homeworld, previously discovered by some unreported alien expedition and brought from there to Sirius IX, where Mudd obtained it. This would be rather coincidental, but not out of the question, since the Rock Beasts' planet was near Motherlode, a regular destination along the somewhat disreputable galactic trade routes that also include Sirius IX.

DOCTOR K'MANEHAI [MAJOR NPC]

TRAITS: Saurian

VALUES:

- Proud of What We Have Built
- My People Must Endure

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL 11	FITNESS 10	PRESENCE 09
DARING 08	INSIGHT 10	REASON 12

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND 02	SECURITY 02	SCIENCE 05
CONN 01	ENGINEERING 02	MEDICINE 04

FOCUSES: Biophysics, Evolutionary Biology, Medicine, Organic Chemistry, Xenobiology

STRESS: 12 **RESISTANCE:** 0

WEAPONS: None

SPECIAL RULES:

- **Immune to Poison:** Saurians are unaffected by most forms of poison, venom, and toxin.
- **Night Vision:** Saurians can see infrared light, and have nictitating membranes that they can close over their eyes to block out visible light and see exclusively in infrared. Tasks a Saurian attempts do not increase in Difficulty because of darkness.

While K'Manehai's deductions are tenuous, they are the only lead the Saurians have on a means to control the creatures, so Governor T'Rimushei requests the crew's assistance in attempting to create some form of chemical agent that can sedate or drive away the Rock Beasts. Naturally, the captain agrees, for the ship is here to assist the Saurians however it can. However, there is no telling how long the chemical research would take, or if it could succeed at all, so other measures must be pursued as well. To this end, the chief engineer should work on strengthening the ship's transporters, tractor beams, or both to make them more effective against the creatures. Meanwhile, the security chief could work with General Zotabia on defensive measures to protect the cities.

GOVERNOR T'RIMUSHEI [MAJOR NPC]

TRAITS: Saurian

VALUES:

- Proud of What We Have Built
- My People Must Endure

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL 11	FITNESS 11	PRESENCE 10
DARING 09	INSIGHT 09	REASON 10

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND 05	SECURITY 03	SCIENCE 03
CONN 01	ENGINEERING 02	MEDICINE 02

FOCUSES: Administration, Economics, Government, Logistics

STRESS: 14 **RESISTANCE:** 0

WEAPONS: None

SPECIAL RULES:

- **Immune to Poison:** Saurians are unaffected by most forms of poison, venom, and toxin.
- **Night Vision:** Saurians can see infrared light, and have nictitating membranes that they can close over their eyes to block out visible light and see exclusively in infrared. Tasks a Saurian attempts do not increase in Difficulty because of darkness.

GENERAL ZOTABIA [MAJOR NPC]

TRAITS: Saurian

VALUES:

- Strength Is All-Important
- Saurians Need Nothing Beyond Ourselves

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL 10	FITNESS 12	PRESENCE 11
DARING 09	INSIGHT 09	REASON 09

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND 04	SECURITY 05	SCIENCE 01
CONN 02	ENGINEERING 02	MEDICINE 02

FOCUSES: Military History, Military Science, Strategy and Tactics, Weaponry

STRESS: 17 **RESISTANCE:** 0

WEAPONS:

- Phaser Type-2 (Ranged, 3A, Size 1H, Charge)
- Disruptor Rifle (Ranged, 4A, Vicious 1, Size 2H, Accurate)
- Unarmed Strike (Melee, 2A, Knockdown, Size 1H)

SPECIAL RULES:

- **Immune to Poison:** Saurians are unaffected by most forms of poison, venom, and toxin.
- **Night Vision:** Saurians can see infrared light, and have nictitating membranes that they can close over their eyes to block out visible light and see exclusively in infrared. Tasks a Saurian attempts do not increase in Difficulty because of darkness.

	388		306			
412	811	116		482		
	388		668		529	
377		813		022		
714		823	813		390	

SCENE 3: WORKING THE PROBLEM

The commanding officer should assign the engineering team to find a way to upgrade the ship's transporters and/or tractor beams to make them more effective against the Rock Beasts. They may decide, based on the ship's specs and crew complement, to focus exclusively on the upgrade that is more likely to succeed, or they may decide to assign teams to both tasks simultaneously. These will be Extended Tasks that proceed through the next Act.

Since both tractor beams and transporters fall under Warp and Subspace Systems (see Core Rulebook p. 160), these tasks have Magnitude 5 and Difficulty 3. Since transporters are a more complex system, give the tractor Task a Work Track of 10 and the transporter Task a Work Track of 12. If the ship's tractor beam starts out with a Strength below 3, it will have to be augmented to at least 3 to make the attempt, so in that case the Difficulty will be 4 and the Work Track will be 12.

Meanwhile, the science officer could run simulations on K'Manehai's suggestion that Rock Beast eggs came to the planet via panspermia (drifting through space). This is a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 1. Upon success, give the science officer the following information:

K'Manehai is correct that the Rock Beasts' composition is robust enough to permit their eggs to survive being blasted into space by asteroid impacts and drifting for millennia through vacuum. However, multiple different species of Rock Beast have emerged on Rikyu at the same time. Simulations show that the probability of so many different species' eggs all traveling panspermically from their native planet to Rikyu is effectively zero. Even if eggs from all the different species had somehow been clustered together and blasted into space by an impact simultaneously, the eggs would have dispersed widely enough en route that no more than one could have intersected Rikyu's orbit.

Therefore, the arrival of the Rock Beasts on Rikyu is not an accident. Someone must have brought them here intentionally. Which suggests that someone has the means to control them. If they could be found, they could hold the key to halting the attacks.

At the same time, the security chief could be working with Rikyu officials to search planetary shipping records for evidence that someone brought the Rock Beasts as contraband. Governor T'Rimushei has reported that the Saurians have not been able to find any such evidence on their own. But ideally the captain or the security Player would think of applying the new information that the Saurians didn't have before: the connection to the sector of space containing Motherlode. Upon searching shipping records for references to Motherlode (an **Insight + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 1), they will find the following:

A cargo freighter registered to a trader named Kilexian has made multiple trips between Rikyu and the Motherlode sector over the past two years. His cargo was reported as bulk mineral ores and geological samples. There are irregularities suggesting he may have bribed the cargo inspectors to look the other way.

An investigation of Kilexian's activity on the planetary data network reveals a number of political posts expressing sympathy with Destroy All Cities, a radical environmentalist group objecting to the colonization of Rikyu and what it perceives as the despoiling of its ecosystem. Destroy All Cities is an offshoot of a radical Saurian sect called the Untainted, which believed that Saurians should rely only on their natural abilities instead of technology, and that civilization should not be allowed to disrupt a planet's natural ecology. While Destroy All Cities has not renounced all technology, it does advocate abandoning interstellar colonization and returning to Sauria to learn to live in harmony with the homeworld.

Given this information, the captain should order the security chief to work with the colony's police force to track down Kilexian.

01.30

HARD ROCK CATASTROPHE
ACT 2: WAR OF THE GARGANTUAS

SCENE 1: MONSTER SCIENCE

The attempt to derive a chemical to control the Rock Beasts is a Research Task under the Medicine or Science discipline, so characters should be assigned appropriately.

The research takes place aboard an aerial research craft which is large enough to hold the lab facilities and able to hover at a safe distance from the Rock Beasts in order to observe their behavior. Doctor K'Manehai will work with the crew on this research, sharing the results of her studies of the Rock Beasts, and it should reinforce to the Players that K'Manehai is deeply fascinated by the Beasts' extraordinary size and durability and the anatomical and biomechanical adaptations that allow such creatures to exist. If the Players' discussions turn toward developing chemical or other weapons that could harm or kill the Rock Beasts, K'Manehai will object hotly, insisting that they are innocent creatures acting merely on instinct and deserving to be understood and protected, not harmed.

In addition to observation, the research team may attempt to gather physical and chemical samples from the Rock Beasts – such things as air samples to measure their pheromones, bits of armor chipped off in their fights, or (if the participants are willing to go there) samples of their waste. Gathering physical samples from the Rock Beasts would be a Difficulty 2 Task of Complication Range 3; rolls of 18-20 would result in Complications such as, but not limited to:

- Discovered and attacked by a Rock Beast
- Caught in a rock slide or sinkhole caused by Rock Beast footfalls
- Attacked by 1- to 2-meter-long parasites shed from the Rock Beasts' bodies
- Rolled over by a sleeping Rock Beast

The Universal Translator could be applied to test the Beasts' sounds for linguistic content. An **Insight + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 2 should determine that they have no significant intellectual capacity or language ability.

Visual observation of Rock Beast behavior could determine any or all of the following in this order, depending on the number of additional successes rolled on a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 2:

- Trinocular Rock Beasts are the most solitary variety, while Quadrupedal Rock Beasts are the most social, sometimes congregating in small herds
- Rock Beasts are highly territorial, especially toward different species, but often toward their own as well
- Rock Beasts are hermaphroditic, but those in a "maternal" phase are highly protective of the territory surrounding their nests, which they mark pheromonally as a warning to others

These observations should provide a foundation for the work to devise a chemical formula for influencing the Rock Beasts' behavior. The research should have two main stages: First, reconstructing the underlying principle of the Mudd "love potion," and second, using that chemical principle to develop a method of controlling or repelling the Rock Beasts. Recreating the "love potion" itself would clearly not work, since it requires direct physical contact and is temporary in its effect. So an understanding of its basic chemistry and neurological effect would be the starting point for developing something else.

To this end, the Players should begin by reviewing Enterprise science officer Spock's research notes and hypotheses pertaining to the Mudd potion and the type of chemical formula that could affect both humanoids and creatures like the Rock Beasts. Spock's theories will turn out to be on the right track but incomplete, thus reducing the Difficulty of the first research Task (identifying the basic chemical principle) to 2.

For the second phase of research, the Players may hypothesize the best method for controlling the creatures. The Gamemaster will be aware that "the Right Way" will be to develop a territorial marking pheromone that will make the Rock Beasts see the cities as nesting ground to defend against all intruders.

The characters working with K'Manehai will discover that the Saurians' lab facilities are somewhat lacking in safety protocols, since the Saurians are resistant to most toxins and have less need for such safeguards. This gives the Task a Complication Range of 5, meaning that Complications will

occur on rolls of 16-20 for attempts to synthesize chemical formulae. The fact that this work involves psychoactive chemicals creates an opportunity for roleplaying; in the event of Complications, or if the wrong research path is chosen, the Player(s) involved in this scene could be exposed to a compound that alters their behavior in unpredictable ways. This could persist as a Complication for any later scene the affected characters are involved in. Possibilities could include:

- A recreation of the Mudd "love potion" or a variation thereon
- A truth serum that unearths embarrassing or disturbing secrets
- A hallucinogen that dredges up a character's traumatic past (allowing roleplaying based on Career Events from Step Six of Lifepath Creation)
- An intoxicant that removes inhibitions like the virus in "The Naked Time"
- A rage drug that causes interpersonal tension to erupt violently
- Whatever else might allow for interesting character development

RIKYU AERIAL RESEARCH CRAFT

A small mobile research platform with antigrav propulsion and aerodynamic design, able to travel quickly through the atmosphere or hover in place for an extended period at either low or high altitude. Equipped with extensive onboard sensors customized for monitoring Rock Beasts, as well as extra shielding and low-power phasers, strictly for defense in case of Rock Beast attack. The platform is not equipped for combat.

TRAITS: Small Craft, Atmospheric Craft, Mobile Science Platform

SYSTEMS

COMMS 07	ENGINES 07	STRUCTURE 08
COMPUTERS 08	SENSORS 09	WEAPONS 01

DEPARTMENTS

COMMAND 01	SECURITY 02	SCIENCE 03
CONN 01	ENGINEERING 01	MEDICINE 02

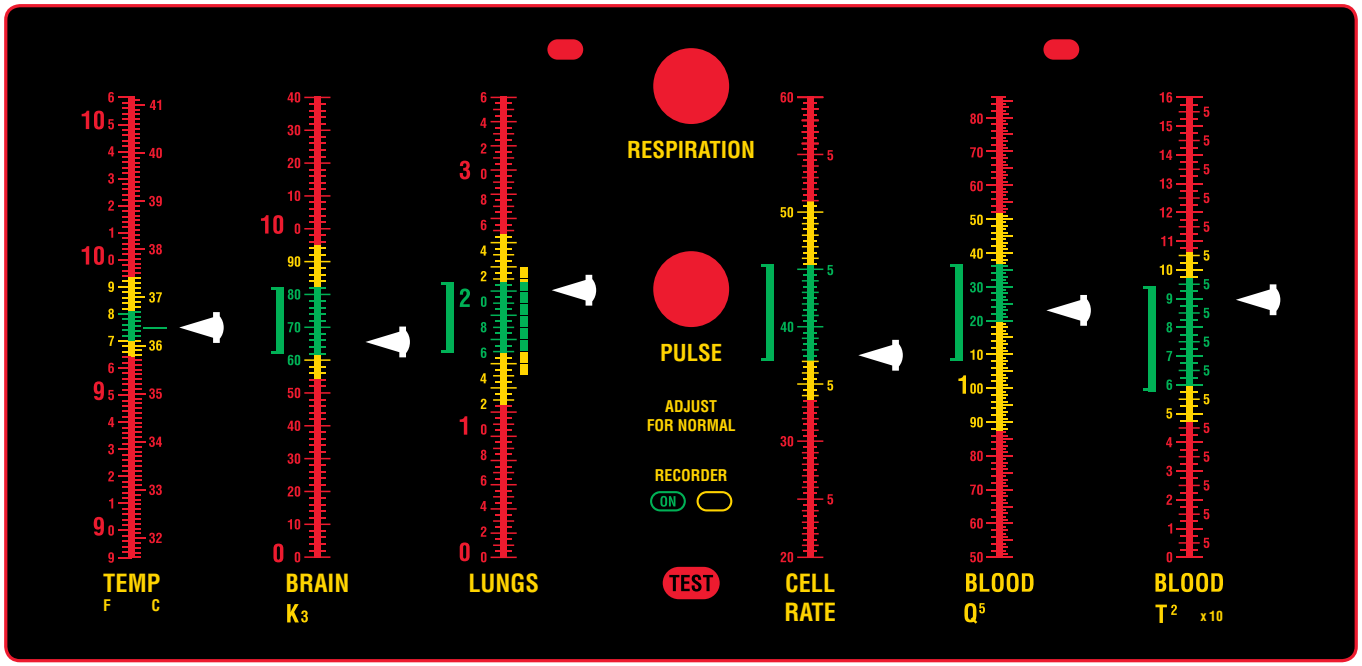
POWER: 4 **CREW SUPPORT:** 4–6
SHIELDS: 5 **RESISTANCE:** 2 **SCALE:** 2

ATTACKS:

- Phaser Bank (Energy, Range Medium, 3, Versatile 2)

TALENTS:

- Advanced Research Facilities
- Advanced Sensor Suites
- Rugged Design



SCENE 2: KILEXIAN ENCOUNTER

Kilexian lives in New Akleyro, a "hanging city" built along and within a shaded cliff face, its inverted towers connected and supported by extensive buttresses and skywalk bridges. The dusky city is softly illuminated by streetlamps that are actually nests for bioengineered firewasps, and by pools and cisterns containing multicolored bioluminescent algae. A mighty river roars past underneath. It might be the one city on Rikyu at least risk of Rock Beast attack, though an attack from above by a heavy enough Rock Beast would run the risk of destabilizing the cliff face, so it's an imperfect refuge. The surefooted Saurians are comfortable there, but it's a vertiginous place for most humanoids, and potentially a dangerous one for a pursuit. So the Starfleet security team accompanying the local police to arrest Kilexian must be on its guard.

General Zotabia has assigned one of his officers, a female named Major T'Rumiak, to assist in the arrest. Unknown to the players, Zotabia is actually the mastermind behind the Rock Beast attacks, and T'Rumiak's true objective is to assassinate Kilexian to keep him from talking. This makes the capture of Kilexian an Opposed Task from two directions, though the Players are unaware of their opposition from T'Rumiak.

When the team comes to arrest Kilexian at his home in one of the hanging towers, he spots them before they're ready and fires on them to cover his escape into the web of skywalks and crossover bridges. The team sets off in pursuit of him through this dramatic and dangerous setting, the terrain making their pursuit difficult and exciting. It will also give T'Rumiak an opportunity to cause Kilexian to fall to his death while making it look like an accident. However, the Players should have a fair chance to capture him before this happens. Kilexian should also have a chance to escape, say, if he manages to elude the players for six Rounds. The Task to avoid falling should be 1 Difficulty level less for the Saurians than for a human character.

POST-ENCOUNTER

If the Players capture Kilexian alive, he will be too closely guarded by Starfleet for T'Rumiak to assassinate him. When questioned, he will turn out to be only loosely committed to the goals of Destroy All Cities, and easily persuaded to give up the location of their secret facility in the mountainous wastes of Rikyu, in exchange for leniency. He insists that he was only responsible for transporting the DAC activists to the Rock Beasts' planet, where they would somehow gain control of the Beasts and load them into his freighter. He swears he has no idea of the chemical formula they used to control the creatures.

If Kilexian escapes or is killed (whether by T'Rumiak or by genuine mishap), the Players will have to fall back on searching his home for evidence. An **Insight + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 1 will turn up traces of mineral dust from the mountain wastes. A further **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 2 performed aboard ship, aided by the vessel's **Science + Sensors**, should allow pinpointing the DAC facility in the mountains.

KILEXIAN [NOTABLE NPC]

TRAITS: Saurian

VALUES:

- Saurians Should Never Have Left Sauria

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL 10	FITNESS 10	PRESENCE 09
DARING 10	INSIGHT 08	REASON 07

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND 01	SECURITY 02	SCIENCE 01
CONN 03	ENGINEERING 02	MEDICINE 00

FOCUSES: Cargo Handling, Piloting, Political Activism

STRESS: 12 **RESISTANCE:** 0

WEAPONS:

- Phaser Type-2 (Ranged, 5▲, Size 1H, Charge)
- Unarmed Strike (Melee, 2▲, Knockdown, Size 1H)

SPECIAL RULES:

- **Immune to Poison:** Saurians are unaffected by most forms of poison, venom, and toxin.
- **Night Vision:** Saurians can see infrared light, and have nictitating membranes that they can close over their eyes to block out visible light and see exclusively in infrared. Tasks a Saurian attempts do not increase in Difficulty because of darkness.

MAJOR T'RUMIAK [NOTABLE NPC]

TRAITS: Saurian

VALUES:

- Doing My Duty Is the Highest Calling

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL 11	FITNESS 10	PRESENCE 09
DARING 09	INSIGHT 07	REASON 08

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND 02	SECURITY 03	SCIENCE 00
CONN 02	ENGINEERING 01	MEDICINE 01

FOCUSES: Sniper, Weaponry, Unarmed Combat

STRESS: 13 **RESISTANCE:** 0

WEAPONS:

- Phaser Type-2 (Ranged, 6, Size 1H, Charge)
- Unarmed Strike (Melee, 2, Knockdown, Size 1H)

SPECIAL RULES:

- **Immune to Poison:** Saurians are unaffected by most forms of poison, venom, and toxin.
- **Night Vision:** Saurians can see infrared light, and have nictitating membranes that they can close over their eyes to block out visible light and see exclusively in infrared. Tasks a Saurian attempts do not increase in Difficulty because of darkness.

SCENE 3: READYING THE GAUNTLET

Any attempt to investigate or raid the DAC facility will have to wait, since General Zotabia reports that a herd of 6 Quadrupedal Rock Beasts has gathered and is making its way toward Akado, a major inland city with a population of over one million. This appears to be an attack that DAC has launched in reaction to Kilexian's exposure. Evacuation has begun, but it cannot be completed in the hours remaining before the stampede reaches it.

The Rock Beasts' approach path is along a river valley hemmed in on either side by mountains, creating a bottleneck that gives the planet's military forces the opportunity to erect defenses, but they need the crew's assistance to complete the work in time. Zotabia lays out a map showing the three defense stages his people are preparing to establish:

- Farthest from Akado, at the downstream end of the river valley, a force field barrier consisting of a line of 8 large generator towers. The barrier is not strong enough to stop all six Beasts for good, but if completed in time, it could delay them long enough to allow completion of the next stage.
- At the narrowest part of the valley, the Beasts must traverse a wide cliff alongside the river and about 30 meters above it. A demolition crew will plant high explosives to undermine the cliff and cause an avalanche above it, hopefully dumping the Rock Beasts into the river, which will sweep them downstream away from the city.
- Between the end of the pass and Akado itself, one of the two converging tributaries that form the main river has been dammed to provide power for the city. If the previous attempts do not stop the Beasts, Zotabia will be forced to blow the dam, wiping out a major agricultural area (which is being evacuated) and causing major economic and material harm to Rikyu – unless the starship crew has succeeded in upgrading its tractors or transporters sufficiently to halt the Beasts' advance.

Governor T'Rimushei has objected to Zotabia's plan to blow the dam, insisting that he should have more faith in Starfleet. But while Zotabia is grudgingly willing to accept some Starfleet assistance in the execution of his plans, he refuses to stand back and leave his world's fate in the hands of outsiders.

This is a good opportunity for one or more of the Player Characters to attempt to win over the proud Zotabia and his resistance to outside help. The general might respond well to a character with a colonial upbringing or a significant amount of combat experience. A member of a physically strong and robust species such as Vulcans or Denobulans could also gain his respect. The more the Players are encouraged to bond with Zotabia, the more dramatic it will be when they eventually discover his betrayal.

ENCOUNTER: THE GAUNTLET

Stopping the Rock Beasts' advance is a Linear Challenge consisting of several increasingly drastic Key Tasks.

First Key Task

The completion of the generator towers for the force field barrier. The Players and any NPC engineers brought in to help can assist in completing the assembly and power hookups for the final 3 towers before the monsters arrive, making this Task itself a Timed Challenge lasting 6 intervals. Each tower's completion is a **Control + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 3 and 2 intervals' duration, but the completion of each tower will add Momentum to reduce the duration of the next assembly Task (representing the fact that personnel will be freed up from one tower to assist in completing the next).

Even if the barrier is erected in time, it will only delay the Rock Beasts' advance for a few rounds before enough of them are attacking it at once to overwhelm it. Since each Quadrupedal Rock Beast has a Stress of 34, let us say that there are 8 force field towers each with Shields of 15, reinforcing one another as needed. Each individual Beast will take 2 points of Stress for every second spent in contact with the force field, and thus if it continues to attack it will run out of Stress and be Staggered, retreating for at least one round until it recovers. But if enough Beasts attack the barrier at once, they can exert enough cumulative damage to reduce Shields to 0 and bring down the barrier. Also, if enough Beasts concentrate attacks on a single section and inflict more than 30 points of damage in one round (before the towers have time to recharge), it will create a hole in the barrier wide enough to allow the Beasts through in single file. One of these will inevitably happen, but it will weaken and slow the Rock Beasts and give the Players and the Saurians time to complete the next stage. This is represented by the gain of 1 point of Momentum for every round by which the Beasts are delayed.

SAURIAN SOLDIER [MINOR NPC]

TRAITS: Saurian

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL 09	FITNESS 10	PRESENCE 08
DARING 09	INSIGHT 07	REASON 08

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND 02	SECURITY 02	SCIENCE 00
CONN 00	ENGINEERING 01	MEDICINE 01

STRESS: 12 **RESISTANCE:** 0

WEAPONS:

- Phaser Type-2 (Ranged, 3▲, Size 1H, Charge)
- Disruptor Rifle (Ranged, 4▲, Vicious 1, Size 2H, Accurate)
- Unarmed Strike (Melee, 2▲, Knockdown, Size 1H)

SPECIAL RULES:

- **Immune to Poison:** Saurians are unaffected by most forms of poison, venom, and toxin.
- **Night Vision:** Saurians can see infrared light, and have nictitating membranes that they can close over their eyes to block out visible light and see exclusively in infrared. Tasks a Saurian attempts do not increase in Difficulty because of darkness.

Second Key Task

The demolition operation at the cliff bottleneck. The cliff has been undermined and planted with explosives to collapse it under the Rock Beasts as they pass, and the Players help plant more explosives on the mountain slope above the cliff to trigger an avalanche that should knock off any creatures too far from the cliff edge to be dropped directly into the river when it collapses. Determining the best places to put the explosives is an **Insight + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 2. Planting the explosives is a **Daring + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 1, taking 2 intervals per demolition charge. It takes 6 intervals for the Rock Beasts to reach the cliff once they get past the force field barrier, so this is also a Timed Challenge, but the longer the barrier holds, the more time there will be to complete planting the charges.

Actually setting off the explosives is Zotabia's Task, but it should be a **Control + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 3, due to the careful timing required and the robustness of the Rock Beasts. The Complication here, unknown to the Players, is that Zotabia secretly wishes the Task to fail. He does not wish to be obvious about it, though, so he settles for his timing being slightly off, raising the Difficulty to 4 and adding 1 to the Complication range.

If the tactic is successful, 1 Beast for each Success rolled above 3 will fall into the river and be swept away (for instance, if 5 Successes are rolled, 2 Beasts will fall in). However, the Beasts have a chance to Recover; i.e., to catch themselves and climb back out of the river, possibly using the debris from the avalanche as a ramp. (They will lose multiple points of Stress by the effort, though, making them easier for the troops to drive away afterward.)

The success of this tactic will also be influenced by the amount of Momentum gained by the first Key Task. If the barrier held long enough, the Rock Beasts are in a close grouping, giving Zotabia a better chance of dunking a larger number of Beasts (i.e. rolling more Successes). If it fell quickly, before most of them reached the barrier, then they are more spread out and the potential number of Successes is lower.

Final Key Task

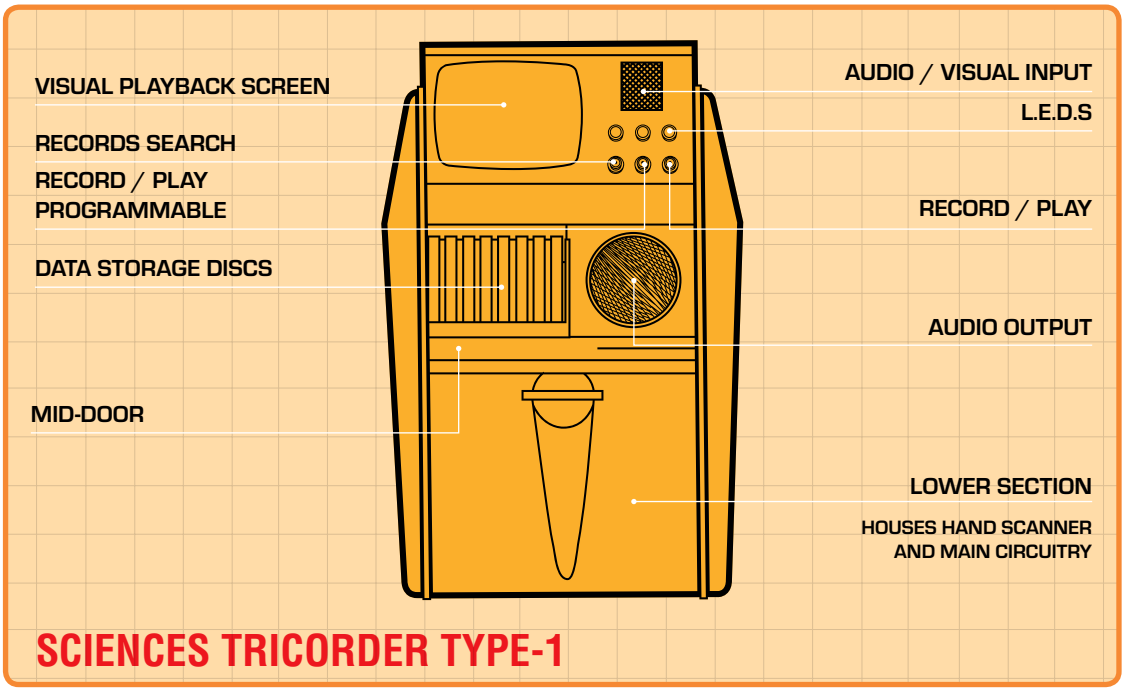
If the previous efforts fail to thin or tire the Rock Beast herd sufficiently for the available troops to drive back the rest – i.e., if there are a minimum of 2 remaining Beasts with a combined Stress of at least 60% of maximum – then Zotabia will argue that there is no choice but to blow the dam and flood the river valley, washing away the remaining Beasts. (Since Zotabia secretly prefers this to happen, it will be difficult to dissuade him if events reach this point.)

If the starship crew's Task to strengthen the starship's transporters and/or tractor beams has not been completed successfully by this point, then the dam will be blown, unless the Players can come up with some clever alternative of their own that the Gamemaster thinks has a chance of success.

If the transporters have been successfully augmented, the crew can attempt to beam away one or more of the Rock Beasts, depositing them safely on an unpopulated continent. This is a **Control + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 5 (baseline 2, +1 each for target and destination not being on transporter pads, +1 for the extreme mass and density of the creature being transported), assisted by ship's **Sensors + Engineering** and any Momentum gained in the enhancement Task. However, the strain on the system is such that the ship takes 2 points of damage +1 additional point for every Success short of 5. For instance, if 3 are rolled, the transportation fails and the ship takes 4 damage. Conversely, if 6 are rolled, the ship takes only 1 damage, and so forth. Damage will be cumulative over multiple attempts, allowing for whatever Repairs can be made in the limited time available. If 5 damage points are taken after reduction from Resistance, the ship will suffer a Breach affecting Engines or Structure and precluding further attempts until the Breach is repaired.

If the tractor beam has been successfully augmented, the crew can attempt to use it against one or more of the Rock Beasts. This is a **Control + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 4 (baseline 2, +1 for the distance and atmospheric attenuation, +1 for the creature's enormous mass). This Task will strain or damage the ship following the same mechanics as in the transporter Task. However, it will also play out as a Conflict between the officer operating the tractor beam and the Rock Beast attempting to break free. From the Beast's perspective, being caught in the beam is a Grappled Complication, and breaking free is a **Fitness + Security Task** with a Difficulty equal to the Strength of the ship's tractor beam minus 1 for the distance and atmosphere (e.g. if the tractor has Strength 4, breaking free of the Grapple is Difficulty 3). If the Rock Beast fails to escape the beam, then the tractor officer will use the next turn to lift it skyward and drop it. The beam is not powerful enough to haul the Beast into orbit through the atmosphere, and dropping such a massive creature from any significant height would be like dropping a bomb; thus, the goal is only to lift the Beast a few hundred meters in the air and drop it hard enough to stun it or frighten it off. The Player rolls Challenge Dice to determine the amount of damage done by the impact; if the Beast takes more than 5 damage after accounting for Resistance, it will be Staggered enough to retreat.

If these measures are successful in removing or driving off all remaining Rock Beasts, the need to blow the dam will be averted. If the attempt fails, or if the crew was unable to upgrade the ship's systems in time to make the attempt, then Zotabia will blow the dam and the monsters will be washed away, but at great cost to the colony.



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HARD ROCK CATASTROPHE
ACT 3: FINAL WARS

SCENE 1: RAIDING THE BUNKER

While the Saurian troops deal with the aftermath of the gauntlet, a Starfleet team will proceed to raid the Destroy All Cities base in the mountains. Zotabia will send Major T'Rumiak and a small squad of soldiers to assist them, although T'Rumiak will secretly have the mission to prevent them from obtaining the chemicals DAC has used to control the Rock Beasts or gaining information about how to synthesize such chemicals.

The DAC base is an underground bunker dug into a low mountain for protection from the Rock Beasts. It should be a fairly small facility with room for about a dozen occupants, and with chambers including a control room, a lab, a store room, an armory, and barracks, facilities, and a small common area, all arranged around two perpendicular corridors, one of which extends into a 12-meter-long entrance tunnel from the mountain face. Outside it is a large oval plain about 3 km north-south by 4 km east-west, hemmed in on three sides by mountains and on the fourth (east) side by force field towers across the 2-km gap in the mountains. The bunker is located just clockwise (south) of the row of towers. There is evidence that the plain has been occupied by Rock Beasts until recently, their presence concealed by sensor-jamming minerals in the high mountains around it. However, the force field barrier has been lowered and the "corral" is empty. Whatever remaining Beasts were there have now been unleashed.

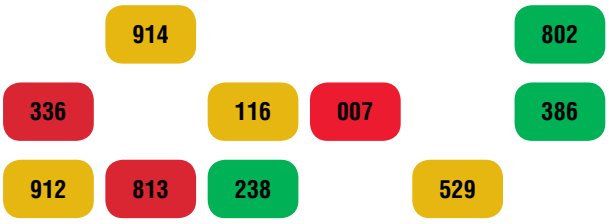
This is confirmed by a report from the ship: multiple Rock Beasts, including several of the largest, hexapedal species, are en route to attack three cities. The extremists' discovery has provoked them to unleash a final attack. The capital city will be under attack in less than six hours, the other two within four hours after that. Even if Doctor K'Manehai and the research team have been successful in synthesizing a control drug, there's no guarantee it will work, so the priority will be to raid the DAC bunker, capture or stun its members before they can destroy everything, and secure whatever control drugs or data remain intact.

This is an Opposed Task from two directions. Not only are the DAC members trying to destroy their records and chemicals before they're captured, but T'Rumiak is secretly trying to stymie Starfleet's efforts to secure them. Structure this scene as an Encounter with three opposing parties: The Starfleet team, T'Rumiak and her small squad of accompanying soldiers, and the DAC members (using the same Minor NPC stats as the Saurian soldiers). The DAC members are fanatical enough that they're willing to die for their cause, and have rigged the bunker with explosives that they will set off if they think the intruders are about to secure their control drugs. The Starfleet team's goal is to capture or stun them all before they can do this. Keep in mind that Saurians are quite durable and hard to knock out or overpower hand-to-hand.

The scenario allows for several possible outcomes. At worst, the explosives will be activated and the entrance tunnel will be collapsed. There should be time for the team to retreat close enough to the entrance to call for emergency beam-out, or they can be beamed out directly if a Player has the foresight to install transporter pattern enhancers (see Rulebook p. 199) at the entrance before entering the tunnel. Failing that, Players will be trapped by the cave-in and require a team to dig them out before they run out of air.

Alternatively, the team may prevent the explosives from being set off but fail to prevent the drugs and data from being destroyed, whether by the DAC members or by T'Rumiak. T'Rumiak will seek to split up from the Starfleet team so she'll be free to destroy any surviving drugs and data or kill any DAC member who might talk, but if she fails at her Deception Task, the Starfleet players will be able to discover her doing so and take her into custody.

At best, the Starfleet team will both capture the DAC members and secure some surviving control drugs. Assume that, no matter what happens, the data on the drugs will be too scrambled to retrieve in time to stop the attack. In this scenario, if T'Rumiak's treachery has not been discovered, she will insist on taking the drugs into her custody to deliver them to K'Manehai's research team, giving her the chance to clandestinely destroy them. If one or more Players have become suspicious of T'Rumiak and resist giving her the drugs, she will be forced to attack, exposing her treachery but giving her a strong chance of success at destroying the drugs. But if T'Rumiak has already been exposed and the drugs have been secured intact, they will be delivered to the research vessel while T'Rumiak is taken in for questioning.



SCENE 2: BEFORE THE FINAL BATTLE

As the Rock Beasts approach the capital, some of the Players should aid the Saurian military in evacuating the city. The Rock Beasts, including at least one Hexapedal Beast and at least two others of the Gamemaster's choice, should reach the outskirts of the city before the science team is ready to deploy the pheromones. Even if the starship's transporter and tractor beam are not too damaged from the Gauntlet, they would not be effective on the enormous Hexaped. The only remaining option is to use high-yield photon torpedoes to kill the Rock Beasts, but by this time, they're close enough to the city outskirts that there would be massive destruction and loss of life in the city if torpedoes were used. The prime minister is adamantly against allowing Starfleet to bomb her capital, and K'Manehai insists it's immoral to kill nonsentient animals that have no malicious intent.

How the rest of this scene plays out depends on the outcome of the previous scene. If any DAC members have been captured, they will refuse to talk no matter what. If T'Rumiak has been exposed, she will be questioned. Although she is reflexively loyal to her commanding officer and has obeyed his orders without question, her commitment to duty can work both ways. Through Social Conflict, the Player interrogating her can attempt a Persuasion Task by appealing to her sense of duty to her people, making her confront the fact that her actions could lead to the deaths of thousands and the ruination of the colony. If she can be convinced to Challenge her Value, she will confess that she is following Zotabia's orders. Under his guidance, she used a false identity to manipulate DAC into carrying out this plan, directing them to the Rock Beasts' planet and helping them develop the control pheromones to capture them and direct their attacks.

If T'Rumiak is still free, or has been captured but not broken by her interrogator, then seeing the destruction of her city will eventually make her realize that her loyalty to Zotabia is misplaced, and she will come forward and confess everything of her own volition. However, the Gamemaster should not have this happen until a fair amount of damage has been done to the city, so there's a cost for the Players' failure to discover the traitors.

If Zotabia is exposed, he will turn out to have fled already, sabotaging the capital's defense systems in the process. If Zotabia is not exposed before this, then the discovery of the sabotage and his disappearance will reveal the truth. Either way, he will leave behind the following terse message:

Expanding to the stars only weakens Sauria by diluting us with the weakness of other races. We need nothing but Sauria's great bounty and our own superior strength. Retreating from these stone creatures may seem like an act of weakness, but it is necessary to stamp out the false ambitions that truly weaken us. Only by abandoning expansion and consolidating ourselves once more can we keep our homeland truly strong and pure.

The only hope now is the control pheromones, either the DAC's surviving supply (if any) or those synthesized by the research team. If T'Rumiak managed to destroy the drugs, with or without being discovered in the process, the research team will have to make do with their own research, and hopefully will have figured out a plan to use the nesting-territory pheromone to convince some of the Rock Beasts to see the cities as their nesting grounds to be defended against other Rock Beasts. On the other hand, if the DAC's drugs are delivered to the research team, have them learn that no samples of Rock Beast sedatives survived intact and only the territory pheromone is still usable.

SCENE 3: GIANT MONSTERS ALL-OUT ATTACK

The Rock Beast attack on New Veranith is now underway, and evacuated buildings on the outskirts are being smashed to pieces and devoured. The defense forces can do little as a result of the sabotage. The Players must do what they can to evacuate civilians, rig defenses from starship resources, use the ship-based distraction tactics from Act One to attempt to direct the battle away from the buildings, or whatever else they and the Gamemaster may wish to try, until K'Manehai and the research team have their pheromonal formula ready to deploy. How long the formula takes to complete is a function of how successful the Players have been at dealing with the challenges of the story and discovering the treachery of Zotabia and T'Rumiak. The longer it took them to achieve those goals, the more damage the Rock Beasts are able to do and the deeper they can penetrate into the city. The details of this are up to the imagination of the Gamemaster and Players – this is a full-on *kaiju*-movie climax, so feel free to have fun with it.

Once the nesting pheromone is ready, the research vessel can fly over the city and spray it around as a protective scent barrier for the intact portions of the city. However, there's a catch: it will also be necessary to get the pheromone inside one or more of the Rock Beasts, to trigger their maternal instincts and make them defend the city instead of attacking it. The only way to get the chemicals inside a Rock Beast is the way Kirk got Mudd's "love potion" into one – by ingestion. A chemical projectile prepared by K'Manehai must be fired, thrown, or dropped into the open mouth of a Rock Beast. This is a **Control + Security Task** whose base Difficulty depends on which Rock Beast is targeted: call it 2 for one of the wide-mouthed, slow-moving Trinocular Rock Beasts, 3 for the narrow-mouthed, faster-moving Quadrupeds, and 4 for the Hexapeds due to the heavy pincers around their mouths. The Difficulty can be increased by factors such as how agitated or mobile the creature is, whether it's devouring a building or a military vehicle, the amount of dust and smoke in the environment, and whether the creature is currently trying to eat or trample the person taking the shot. K'Manehai only has four projectiles ready, and any that fails to go into its target's mouth will be destroyed on impact.

If one or more of the projectiles are successfully fired into a Rock Beast's mouth, then within two rounds, that Beast or Beasts will begin to defend the surviving portions of the city from the other Beasts. The success of this tactic will depend on which and how many Beasts are affected. The optimal outcome is to turn a Hexaped, the largest and most powerful of the breeds, but it is also the hardest breed to succeed with. If the Players turn a smaller Rock Beast or two instead, they may have a harder time fighting off the Hexaped and may need assistance from the starship's tractor or transporter, or whatever other tactic the Players can dream up. Ideally, though, the "maternal" Rock Beasts will successfully fight off the others, and the Players will simply need to make sure the area is fully evacuated, then sit back and watch.

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HARD ROCK CATASTROPHE CONCLUSION

CONCLUSIONS

Once the capital is safe, K'Manehai's team will have enough time to rig pheromonal defenses for the other endangered cities, and they may be delivered "off-camera." K'Manehai says she should be able to modify the territorial pheromone to cause the Rock Beasts to recognize Saurian scent as that of their offspring, so that they will pose no further threat to Saurian lives. In time, she believes, she can reconstruct the sedative drug used by DAC, which will let the Rikyuites corral the Rock Beasts and ship them back to their home planet. Although she hopes she can convince Governor T'Rimushei and the people of Rikyu to let some of the Rock Beasts stay on one of Rikyu's small, uninhabited land masses – a Monster Island, so to speak.

CONTINUING VOYAGES...

The Players could discover that Zotabia has fled the planet and set out to hunt him down. If not, he will be captured by the very defense forces he once commanded and placed on trial. Either of these could be an opportunity for a character who bonded with Zotabia to resolve their character arc.

Alternatively, the crew could help K'Manehai perfect the sedative drug, then ship the Rock Beasts back to their home planet and explore their native ecosystem. Perhaps some surviving members of Destroy All Cities are there, planning to use their control of Rock Beasts to take revenge for their defeat by attacking a Federation world.

HANDOUT 1

The *U.S.S. Enterprise* discovered these organisms in late 2269 on an uncharted planet in the sector adjacent to this one, while pursuing Harcourt Fenton Mudd, an escaped felon who had recently been arrested on Motherlode. Native to a desert environment, the "Rock Beasts" can enter a dormant stage with minimal life readings, appearing to be inanimate stone outcroppings until they awaken. This is why the Saurians have had a hard time tracking them down in the mountains. The *Enterprise* crew observed two distinct species: a crocodile-like quadruped like the one that attacked the city, and another species with a rounded, three-eyed head, a single set of forelimbs, and a thick, snakelike rear body.

The *Enterprise* reports indicate that the Rock Beasts, while immune to phaser fire, were susceptible to the ingestion of a chemical compound which Mudd had attempted to sell as a "love potion," but which turned out to induce merely a short-term euphoria and affinity between the toucher and touched, followed by a longer period of depression and hostility.

Unfortunately, all of the crystals containing the liquid were used up or destroyed before the substance could be analyzed, so there is no record of its chemical structure beyond what *Enterprise* science officer Spock could extrapolate from its effects and chemical residue. Mudd reported "discovering" the potion on Sirius IX, but it had an adverse effect on that planet's natives, and an investigation showed no evidence that the compound was previously known there.

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